

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

I. Status of the claims

Claims 7-18, 23, 24, 27, 29, 34, 40, 41, and 44-61 are pending. Claims 9-18 and 44-61 have been allowed. Claims 1-6, 19-22, 25, 26, 28, 30-33, 35-39, 42, and 43 have been canceled herein.

II. The Present Amendments

No new matter has been added by the amendments herein.

Claims 7, 8, 23, 24, 27, 29, 34, 35, 40, 41, and 56 have been rewritten as independent claims that incorporate the limitations of the claims from which they depended. Claim 40 has also been amended to correct a typographical error.

III. The Office Action

The June 7 Action indicates that claims 9-18 and 44-61 are allowed. Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of these claims.

The Action further indicates, at page 5, that claims 7, 8, 23, 24, 27, 29, 34, 35, 40 and 41 are objected to as depending from a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. These claims have been rewritten in independent form incorporating the limitations of the base claim and of any intervening claim from which they depended. The Action further states at page 5 that claims 44-50 are objected to as depending from a rejected base claim. This statement appears to be inadvertent, both because claims 44-50 are allowed and because the claims depend from claim 9, which is also allowed. In the course of preparing this Amendment, however, it was noted that allowed claim 56 depended from rejected claim 10. Claim 56 has also been rewritten as an independent claim.

The Action further indicates at page 5 that claims 40, 41, 50, 55, and 56 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph set forth in the Action. This statement, too, appears to be inadvertent, both because claims 44-50 are allowed and because there does not appear to be a rejection under § 112 set forth in the Action.

Appl. No. 10/077,413
Amdt. dated December 7, 2004
Reply to Office Action of June 7, 2004

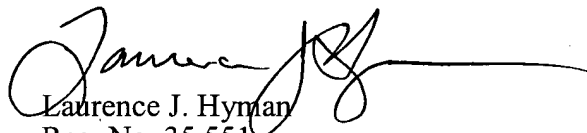
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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,


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